606 to be a "good wife", to do "everything right", to learn what her husband likes. If she does not obey her mother-in-law, she is criticized as "rude", and the women say that the groom will "divorce her soon".

423 596 After the marriage, and especially after she bears children, a wife is regarded as a charter member of her husband's "byet" (lit. house), his family of procreation, continuing his patrilineal kinship unit, regardless of whether they move to residence elsewhere or not. Nevertheless, it is the "byet" that is the landholding unit among most "rest"-owning Amhara, and each biological unit within it receives an allocation of land for usufruct; the limit of one able-bodied plowman is regarded as 5-10 "qada". Thus, the biological family of procreation does not own land, nor does it control it, until, with the death of elders and advancing age, it becomes the "family of orientation" to which a succeeding generation must give obedience.

596 422 Meanwhile, however, the biological family unit does own the cattle and other mobile goods with which they started their married life, and the increase therefrom. This gives them some partial economic independence.

[731] 423 166 361 When, due to war, epidemics (e.g. malaria), or famine (erosion), a "byet" decides to abandon, for the time being, the ancestral lands, and migrates to another district, it usually huddles together in one or a minimum of residential hamlets, sometimes for several generations, until times are better. Then it buds off so rapidly that soon only a few huts remain on the location of the original hamlet of refuge. Thereupon kinsmen may claim "betäña" rights of usufruct from more distant kinfolk who had remained be-

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

423 hind on the ancestral lands.

●166 This succession of events has taken place so often in Amhara
361 history, that very few old settlements have remained on the same
[591] spot for even a century. As a result, many regional varieties of "patrilocal residence" have developed, and even "matrilocal residence" is not excluded, though most bridegrooms would shun such a fate. Also, the land tenure of the Amhara has become complex and replete with litigation, because of the amorphous definition of "byet", which sometimes emphasizes the consanguineal aspect, sometimes the residential, of kinship after marriage.

B. Problems of the Married Couple and Divorce.

586 When a couple has remained married for a number of years, people say they are "r̈agga" (lit. coagulated), stuck on each other. For divorce of a first marriage is common as the partners mature.

If her husband neglects her, wanders off, is a drunkard, or beats her too often, a woman may decide to initiate divorce proceedings. A man may do so if she is disobedient, e.g. wanders off to town without his permission.

587 If a man takes a "damoz" wife in addition to his "semanya" wife, the latter has no recourse in court. But if he takes anouther "semanya" wife, she can have him arrested, if she can locate him, for breaking his oath. She then angrily accuses him of doing a stupid thing, "you married one ox hump (shanna) above the other". He may be fined, but his first marriage may still remain valid. If a "semanya" wife hears that her husband has a previous wife, she often laughs, flattered, mocking the other woman by saying: "I married on top of her and not below" - for evidently, the man,

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

(GONDAR)

*175 633 [159] [793] left Gondar for Shoa, where he became a favorite at the court of Emperor Menelik.

Alaqā Gabra-Hānnā was not the only one to leave Gondar in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Conditions there had become increasingly miserable. In 1866 Tēwodros, angered by the opposition of the Gondarē clergy to his plans for unifying the country through a standing national army, turned his wrath against them into a fearful pillage of the churches of Gondar.* The next emperor, Takla Giyorgis, worked feverishly to rebuild Gondar during his few years in power (1869–72). It was to no avail. In 1887 a large army of dervishes invaded Ethiopia from the Sudan and sacked Gondar, destroying it more completely than had Tēwodros.

*175 633 643 [648]

*175 633 [166] The priests and monks who survived carried on. Gondar remained an important center for instruction in *aquāquām* and *tergum*, though Gojjam became more important for the study of *qenē* and other schools in Bagemder and Tigre for the study of *zēmā*. The civil order, however, was thoroughly demoralized. Gondarēs left in large numbers for the countryside or made their way to Lāstā and more distant provinces.

*175 633 643 648 At the time of the dervish invasion, the churchmen of Gondar appealed to Emperor Yohānnes for succor. The text of their message—the last utterance from the old capital—began as follows:

> O master! The heathen have come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Gondar in heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Dambiyā; and there was none to bury them.[11]

Yohānnes responded at once. It was to revenge defenseless Gondar that he led the expedition against the dervishes which cost him his life, thereby leaving the way open for the accession of the House of Manz.

The Role of Manz

131 133 Manz is a rugged rural area of about 850 square miles located in the northeast horn of Shoa Province.[12] It lies on a broad plateau at a height of ten thousand feet above sea level. This plateau is crosscut by a number of rivers which flow westerly to become part of the great Blue Nile Basin. The valleys of the rivers are flanked by fairly abrupt cliffs, which make travel from one part of Manz to another slow going. These rivers form boundaries between the geographical divisions within Manz, which is divided into three major parts: Māmā Meder in the south, Lālo Meder in the center, and Gērā Meder in the north. The entire area of Manz is itself bounded by steep mountains.[13]

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* Fortunately he preserved hundreds of manuscripts from Gondar's churches which eventually found their way to the British Museum after the Napier Expedition against Tēwodros in 1868.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

sident student by familiarizing him with the network of churches, monasteries, and academies which constitute the stations along which the student will progress once he leaves his natal parish.

The completion of psalter (dawiyd) is frequently considered a sign of the student's readiness to be tested by the local bishop (abuna) for certification as a deacon. The boy is fifteen or sixteen by this time, and the recipient of church fields in return for his performance in the Mass; with his marriage a few years later, he becomes a priest. The boy bent on a debtera career generally waits until he has been certified a deacon, since this is considered a prerequisite for enrollment in his first debtera school.

With the exceptions already cited, a man is certain to oppose his son's departure, since, sentiment aside, the boy's move usually represents a significant economic loss. When he leaves his natal parish, he does so secretly, journeying to a distant debtera, in order to conceal his new residence from his father. Thus, he begins his debtera career without kinfolk or friends to protect him, without resources to meet his subsistence needs.[23]

[23] Since liberation, government (secular) schools have offered an alternative to an ecclesiastical education pursuant to government employment. The effects of this have been limited, however, since only an estimated 3% pass beyond the eighth grade (ESA 1965:198). In addition children of townsmen and non-Amhara are disproportionately represented in these classes.

734 [735] [823] [778] his hamlet to become a mendicant, begging from alms-givers at the gates of large and famous churches. Even the sickman whose economic circumstances enable him to remain at home may depart, to seek an efficacious tebel spring, once locally available therapies prove ineffective.

*753 734 Among the ailments of this category, leprosy is considered particularly loathsome. In the abstract, it is associated with a hereditary vector; in practice, the leper's neighbors fear contact with him, and the sickman who remains at home is physically segregated in a hut of [582] his own, away from other residents of the hamlet. Be- [166] cause marriages are difficult to arrange for the primary relatives of lepers, the son of a leper frequently chooses to move away from the paternal hamlet to some place where his family's affliction is unknown.

*753 The absence of more profound moral consequences for either category of ailment can be explained, first, by the fact that associations existing between the sickman and sanction-wielding supernaturals are unaffected by either illness or cure, since these maladies are linked to non-purposive pathogenic agencies, such as gerifta [755] and likift. Further, effective cures are either secular, [757] and thus require the therapeutic assistance of no [778] sanction-wielding supernaturals, or, in the case of tebel therapies, rely on only the socially sanctioned supernaturals of the Church.